

University of Dundee

University of Dundee Public Engagement Strategy

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Public Engagement Strategy

University of Dundee

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Gold Engage Watermark

National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement

Foreword from Professor John Rowan

Vice Principal (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Wider Impact)

The University of Dundee has set out an ambitious vision to become Scotland's leading university within the next 25 years. Public engagement is a key strand of our founding mission to transform lives through the creation, sharing and application of knowledge. We remain committed to widening access to education and to working across local and global scales to make a difference in the world.

Our engagement work is influenced by Dundee's history of radical thought, enlightened public discourses and appetite for innovation in all aspects of public life. Within Scotland and beyond, Dundee is renowned for its leading work in medicine, life sciences, energy studies and the creative industries, especially in design and digital games. We recognise that this work is only worthwhile if it addresses relevant questions and issues in today's society and only useful if it's shared as freely and widely as possible.

The University of Dundee is committed to the highest standards of public engagement and we are proud to be a signatory of the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement's Manifesto for Public Engagement. In 2020, we became the first university in Scotland to earn the NCCPE's Gold Watermark Award, demonstrating a significant commitment to embedding support for public engagement within the institution.

Building on this success and in support of our strategic approach to public engagement we have created and developed the University's Public Engagement Forum. This Forum has representation from all our academic schools and professional services directorates and has supported the development of this Public Engagement Strategy. Through regular meetings and working groups the Forum drives the embedding of public engagement throughout the University and provides a channel for discussion and development for committed public engagement champions.

Launching this Strategy brings with it a commitment to sharing our aims, consulting and collaborating with our audiences and partners, evaluating our practices, and tracking the impact to people's lives. We recognise that our engagement needs to be well resourced and provide long term stability and sustainability of impact, and we will recognise and reward our successes.

With this strategy, the University of Dundee makes a firm pledge to deliver the highest quality public engagement experience for its staff, students and partners. Guided by a team of public engagement professionals based throughout the University, we are excited by the prospect of continuing our excellent public engagement work and transforming lives in everything we do.

Our vision



→ At the D'Arcy Thompson Zoology Museum

Public engagement is essential to our vision to connect with communities and transform lives locally and globally. It is only through sharing our experiences that we can co-create a culture of curiosity, confidence, and engagement. By listening to and learning from our partners and audiences, we work with our community to achieve impact that benefits all society.

Purpose of the Strategy

Here we set out our plans for working with individuals and communities within our city, our region, and across the world.

We share:

- our vision of achieving beneficial impact through our public engagement, locally and globally
- our desire to create a culture of active participation amongst our community
- the steps we will take to reach our goals

We will review and update this Strategy every five years through consultation with the wider community.

Please share your feedback with us at:
engage@dundee.ac.uk.



**First university
in Scotland
to earn the NCCPE's
Gold Watermark Award**

What public engagement means to us

We've mentioned 'public engagement' many times in this Strategy, but we realise that the term 'public engagement' is interpreted in many ways by different people and we take some time here to share what it means to us.

Defining public engagement

In the UK, public engagement with research is supported by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE). The University of Dundee supports and adopts the National Co-ordinating Centre's inclusive definition of public engagement:

"Public engagement describes the [many different] ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit."

We have found that, done well, public engagement is a pathway that delivers many positive impacts and benefits to all who participate.

Our inclusive approach

We recognise that the people and organisations we work with are unique and diverse. This means we use different approaches when working together to help deliver the best outcomes for communities. Likewise, the ways in which we evaluate the outcomes and impact of each engagement project need to be tailored. Our engagement should be unique, personal and thoughtful, and as often as possible co-designed or with input from communities from the very outset. Our engagement will be guided by the University's ethical principles.

Each project, research area and degree course will have their own approach to engagement and will work with audiences that enhance their work and benefit from working with us. This Strategy does not seek to define or limit these, but to support engagement in all that we do.

Some of the audiences we work with include:

- Community groups, both those local to us and globally in areas where we have a presence
- School pupils, teachers and parents
- Creative organisations, artists and makers
- Industry and policymakers
- Patient groups and carers

Who does public engagement

Responsibility for public engagement goes beyond our network of dedicated public engagement professionals. All staff and students are encouraged to take part in public engagement activities at every stage of their academic and professional careers. This helps fulfil the University's aim of being an engaged institution. It also provides those who take part with valuable skills and experience that will benefit them professionally and personally.

How we engage

Since our foundation in 1881, the University of Dundee has been a University 'for the city', not just 'of the city'. Our integral role in the city and beyond can only be maintained by taking a well-rounded approach to public engagement. We recognise that engagement and impact have multiple dimensions and these are achieved through strong and effective partnerships that anchor us in our communities.

1. Engagement with Research – We work with the public on research projects where their knowledge, expertise and skills can enhance our research.
2. Engaged Education – We support engagement activities that enrich our educational practice and benefit wider society.
3. Social Responsibility – Our values drive us to maximise the benefits we generate for and with society; this includes reaching out to those who may not readily access the University.
4. Knowledge Exchange – We increase the equitable two-way flow of knowledge and insight between the University and the wider community, fostering debate, creating wealth and stimulating enterprise.

Each of these four approaches drives our vision of transforming lives in our local communities and across the world.



Based on a diagram from the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement



Goals and Approaches

Our goals and approaches are based on the eight strands of the University's Strategy that drives our work to 2022. This Strategy will be supported by delivery documents that set out the priorities, timescales and targets for each of these strands.

To intensify our impact locally and globally, by engaging industry, policy-makers and the public, and to develop employability, enterprise and work-based learning for all.

Goal 1: Our university community understands the intrinsic value of public engagement.

We will achieve this by:

- consulting our staff, students and partners to ensure this Strategy meets our mutually defined needs and expectations
- recruiting leaders across the University who will advocate for public engagement
- incorporating public engagement training in our leadership programmes
- embedding public engagement in our recruitment, induction, promotions, and appraisal processes
- ensuring all staff and students are aware of the many different ways they can contribute to public engagement activity



→ Work Experience Week at the School of Life Sciences

Top **20** in the World
→ Times Higher Education
University Impact Rankings

Goals and Approaches



→ Recording stories with the local community

Top **4** in the UK
for student
satisfaction
→ National Student Survey 2019

Advance our values

Goal 2: We share our best practice and celebrate our successes widely.

We will achieve this by:

- promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in our engagement activity
- sharing our work through a variety of dissemination activities; such as publications, talks and workshops
- nominating staff and students for external prizes and commendations for their public engagement work
- recognising excellent performance and outcomes through internal recognition and awards

Enable our people to flourish

Goal 3: Our staff and students are confident in delivering their public engagement activities and are aware of where support can be found.

We will achieve this by

- enhancing personal development and wellbeing, by providing and promoting public engagement training that meets the needs of our staff and students
- increasing the number of opportunities to participate in engagement activities that are linked to training
- using our team of public engagement professionals to support our work
- ensuring staff and students are aware of opportunities
- ensuring all staff and students have access to training, resources and support based on their needs
- supporting our staff and students to participate in national public engagement networks and activities

Goals and Approaches

Embed interdisciplinary research and teaching, through a team-based approach to our key themes and deliver projects which evidence impact

Goal 4: Our engagement work is collaborative.

We will achieve this by:

- fostering a cooperative approach to public engagement across our strategic strands and research themes
- encouraging and facilitating the initiation of public engagement work across schools and directorates; between staff and students; and between scholarship, research and cultural agencies
- using our Public Engagement Forum to deliver our strategic priorities, and share our learning and best practice

Goal 5: Our PE work is recognised by its strengths and impact.

We will achieve this by:

- supporting the development and delivery of engagement activities with defined aims and outcomes
- providing resources that support evaluation of engagement activities
- encouraging partnership working with external organisations

→ Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the NHS



Goals and Approaches

Deliver sustainable ambition

Goal 6: Our engagement work is financially sustainable and environmentally responsible.

We will achieve this by:

- working with partners to ensure legacy is at the heart of our public engagement projects
- providing support with grant applications and external funding sources
- growing the number and scale of funding we and our partners receive to support our engagement work
- increasing the amount of public engagement funding received within research grants
- using resources thoughtfully and working in innovative ways to reduce our ecological impact

→ Festival of the Future

Goal 7: We invest in our campus to create places that encourage others to engage with us.

We will achieve this by:

- opening up existing spaces on campus that support our engagement work
- creating new spaces, when appropriate, specifically designed for engagement
- assessing the state of campus facilities and ensuring they meet current accessibility standards
- consulting with people who come on campus, and those we'd like to encourage on campus, regarding their needs



Goals and Approaches

Embrace One Dundee approach by strengthening our culture of partnership working

Goal 8: The wider community wants to engage with us, and we are valued as a partner that makes a difference.

We will achieve this by:

- listening to and understanding the needs of our communities
- supporting activity that builds trust and partnership working between us and our partners
- working in collaboration to solve problems
- developing projects and networks that foster shared understandings and motivations within our communities
- working with organisations with expertise that complement our own
- seeking advice from experts on our plans and activities
- valuing, acting on, and responding to feedback from our partners

Goal 9: Our partners and communities recognise engagement is at our core and encourage others to work with us.

We will achieve this by:

- sharing our vision with our partners and communities
- understanding the needs of our partners and develop partnership agreements
- welcoming feedback from our partners
- providing resources supporting our vision that our staff and students can use when working with partners

Grow and diversify our student community

Goal 10: Our engagement work represents our diverse and uniquely welcoming community and is anchored in fairness of access to our students.

We will achieve this by:

- opening routes for everyone to study and work with us through our excellent outreach and widening access programmes
- supporting Further Education in our region to develop skills
- working with partners to support informal and lifelong learning
- developing partnerships that increase the number of bursaries and free places we offer to students from every area of the world



University
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Feedback? Questions?

Get in touch:
engage@dundee.ac.uk